

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05  
H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02  
SS-15 ICA-20 /094 W  
-----000550 080413Z /15

R 071224Z SEP 78  
FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7605  
INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN  
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG  
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS CAPE TOWN 1462

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SHUM, SOCI, PINS, SF  
SUBJECT: CROSSROADS: BULLYING THE HELPLESS

REF: CAPE TOWN 1459

FOLLOWING EDITORIAL APPEARED IN THIS MORNING'S CAPE TIMES  
IN REACTION TO YESTERDAY'S MIDNIGHT POLICE SWOOP ON THE  
CROSSROADS CAMP:

1. "THERE IS A CONSENSUS IN THE PENINSULA THAT ALTERNATIVE  
ACCOMODATION SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO SQUATTER COMMUNITIES  
BEFORE THE BULLDOZERS MOVE IN AND MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN  
ARE CAST OUT INTO THE COLD. THIS, NO DOUBT, IS ONE REASON  
WHY THE AUTHORITIES HAVE HESITATED TO DESTROY THE CROSSROADS  
COMMUNITY AND RENDER THEM HOMELESS IN THE TEETH OF A CAPE  
WINTER. BUT THE NATIONALIST GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED THAT  
CROSSROADS MUST GO. IN THE MEANTIME, IT IS EMPLOYING A CRUEL  
SPECIES OF HARASSMENT TO BREAK THE SPIRIT OF THE INHABITANTS  
AND GET THEM TO MOVE SOMEWHERE ELSE, ANYWHERE ELSE, IT APPEARS.  
IN A NIGHT RAID, MOUNTED BY A STRONG FORCE OF ARMED POLICE,  
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INCLUDING MANY IN THE DREADED CAMOUFLAGE UNIFORMS, 400  
PEOPLE WERE ARRESTED FOR OFFENCES UNDER THE PASS LAWS.

2. "THE REPORTS OF THE RAID SUGGEST THAT IT WAS CALCULATED  
TO STRIKE TERROR INTO THE HEARTS OF THE INHABITANTS. THEY WERE  
WOKEN FROM THEIR BEDS AND CALLED UPON TO PRODUCE SATISFACTORY  
DOCUMENTS AND, IF UNABLE TO DO SO,

WERE HUSTLED OFF INTO CUSTODY. IT TAKES LITTLE IMAGINATION TO PICTURE THE TRAUMATIC EFFECT ON CHILDREN WATCHING THEIR MOTHERS AND FATHERS DISAPPEARING INTO THE NIGHT OR, IF MORE FORTUNATE, BEING TAKEN ALONG WITH THEIR PARENTS TO PRISON. NO DOUBT THE POLICE WERE ACTING WITHIN THE LAW; THEY WERE DOING THEIR DUTY IN TERMS OF THE LAW AND THE INSTRUCTIONS OF AUTHORITY. IT IS NOT THE POLICE WHO ARE TO BLAME. THE ENTIRE SOCIAL STRUCTURE IS TO BLAME. A DISPENSATION WHICH CAN ONLY BE ENFORCED IN SUCH WANTON ACTS OF CRUELTY IS ROTTEN TO THE CORE. LET MORE FORTUNATE HOUSEHOLDERS, THOSE NOT SUBJECT TO THE PASS LAWS, IMAGINE THEIR OWN FEELINGS IF THEIR HOMES WERE TO BE INVADED BY ARMED MEN IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT AND THEIR CHILDREN REQUIRED TO STAND AND WATCH WHILE THEIR PARENTS WERE INTERROGATED IN THEIR NIGHT ATTIRE, BEFORE BEING TAKEN AWAY IN CUSTODY. IT IS DIFFICULT TO CREDIT THE REPORTS THAT WINDOWS AND DOORS WERE SMASHED IN BY THE RAIDING PARTIES. NO DOUBT A FULL INQUIRY WILL BE LAUNCHED TO ESTABLISH THE TRUTH OF SUCH REPORTS. BUT WHETHER IT WAS A KNOCK ON THE DOOR AT MIDNIGHT - OR A BOOT THROUGH THE DOOR - IS A DETAIL. THE RAID ON CROSSROADS WAS A GRATUITOUS ACT OF CRUELTY. SUCH THINGS ARE A CAUSE OF BITTER SHAME TO DECENT SOUTH AFRICANS.

3." THIS SPECTACLE OF AUTHORITY BULLYING THE HELPLESS AND THE WEAK HAS UNHAPPY PRECEDENTS IN OUR HISTORY - IN THE FARM-BURNING AND MARTIAL LAW HARASSMENT CARRIED OUT BY KITCHENER IN 1899-1902. THEN, AS NOW, IT SUGGESTED A MERCILESS KRAGDADIGHEID IMPREGNABLY UNCLASSIFIED

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CONVINCED OF ITS OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS. BUT IT IS NOT A SIGN OF STRENGTH. ON THE CONTRARY, IT IS A SIGN OF PROFOUND WEAKNESS, THE INSTINCTIVE REACTION OF SMALL AND FRIGHTENED MEN WHO SEE THEIR POLICIES BREAKING DOWN IN THE FACE OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REALITY. BUT SUCH CRUEL DEEDS LEAVE A BITTER HERITAGE. THIS SOCIETY WILL REAP WHAT IT HAS SOWN.

4. "AT A TIME WHEN THE WHITES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA HAVE A STRONG MORAL CASE FOR SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT AGAINST TERRORIST BARBARISM, THE CROSSROADS RAID WILL BE SEEN AS FURTHER PROOF THAT THE WHITES OF THE SUB-CONTINENT ARE SO LITTLE CONCERNED ABOUT THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS AS TO DESERVE LITTLE SYMPATHY THEMSELVES. IF THE SUPPORT OF THE WEST IS IMPORTANT TO SOUTH AFRICA, AS IT SURELY IS, THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST CROSSROADS IS AN ACT OF FOLLY. IT IS FINELY CALCULATED TO ALIENATE WHAT SYMPATHY REMAINS IN WESTERN CAPITALS-AND TO ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF SOVIET IMPERIALISM."  
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## Message Attributes

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